

# Program Self-Assessment Booklet 4

## Management Systems: Record-Keeping and Reporting

### Core Question to be answered by the Self-Assessment team:

*How efficient and effective are the record-keeping and reporting systems in providing accurate, confidential, and timely information regarding children, families, and staff and in supporting quality services?*

### Purpose:

Effective record-keeping and reporting systems provide the information needed to individualize programs for children and families, to monitor the quality of program services, to assist in program planning and management, and to ensure the delivery of quality services (Rationale for 1304.51(g), p. 184).

This booklet will help you to assess if the program meets Federal *Performance Standards* relating to maintaining publicly accessible records, records on refusals of health services, records relating to the dispensing of medication, etc. *Performance Standards*: 1301.30; 1304.20(e)(5); 1304.22(c)(3)-1304.22(c)(5); 1304.51(g)-1304.51(h); 1304.52(k)(3)(i); 1308.4(l); 1308.6(e)(4).

Note: At least one staff person should sit on this review team so they can access and review child / family files. Other team members may not have access to these files based on the program's confidentiality policy.

As you conduct your assessment of the program's record-keeping and reporting systems, pay close attention to:

- The way that child / family files are maintained and the contents of each file
- The reports that are used by program managers to maintain program accountability and keep them advised of the program's progress in delivering services to children and families
- The reports that are generated on child outcomes for children three to five years old that provide information on progress on the required domains, elements, and indicators when they enter the program, at a mid-point in the year, and at the end of the year

The Child / Family Audit Checklist has been included in this booklet as an optional instrument. Team members may find it to be a helpful tool in assessing the effectiveness of the program's record-keeping and reporting systems

Other helpful tools to support data collection in this area follow.

## Review:

Ask the Head Start director and / or responsible manager to provide you with access to the following documents:

- Program policies and procedures pertaining to confidentiality
- A sample number of child / family records to review. Team members may choose to use the attached Child / Family Audit Checklist, modify it to meet the individual needs of your program, or develop your own data collection tool to record the results of record reviews (In order to comply with policies pertaining to the confidentiality of records, these files should be reviewed by staff participating on the assessment team.)
- A selection of reports used by supervisors and managers to determine the status of program operations and services (e.g., ongoing monitoring reports, weekly activity reports, computerized tracking reports, and child outcome reports)
- The program's most recent *Program Information Report (PIR)*
- **Important data sources relevant to this area such as the *PRISM* report, Community Assessment, strategic plan or short and long term program goals**

Parents serving on this team may choose to review their own child and family file and compare the format and contents with Head Start regulations pertaining to record-keeping.

## File Audit (Child/Family Files):

After completing your audit, summarize the strengths and identify any patterns that emerge that point to weaknesses in the system.

Summary comments:

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## Interview and questionnaire:

Ask your team leader to identify who within the organization is in charge of maintaining child/family records. Interview that individual and ask the following:

Describe the system you use to maintain records for children and families.

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Who has access to child/family records?

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Describe the safeguards in place to keep information on families and children confidential.

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What procedures do you follow when a parent asks to see his/her child's file?

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**With the assistance of the person(s) in charge of maintaining child/family records, complete the following questionnaire:**

Are standardized forms used for record-keeping throughout the program?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there documents that record when parents refuse permission for health services for their children?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there physician instructions and written parent authorizations for all medications administered by staff ?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When medication is given to the child, is the amount, time, date and person giving it recorded?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do files on enrolled children indicate that follow-up occurred when health needs were identified? Were parents contacted? If necessary, was assistance provided with transportation or payment for medication?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there a method for staff to report observations of child abuse and neglect in accordance with local laws?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you seek parents' permission to transfer file information when a child leaves Head Start?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Reporting Systems:

### Interview:

Interview members of the program management team and ask:

What kinds of data are collected and what kinds of reports are generated to inform you about program operations?

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What procedures are in place for producing and disseminating status reports, including those related to child outcomes?

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How do you use these reports to manage the program? Are reports shared with other managers and the program director?

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To what extent is your program engaged in using automated information systems?

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Do you seek parents' permission to transfer file information when a child moves from Early Head Start to Head Start?

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**Interview the Head Start director and ask:**

Are there record-keeping and reporting systems that help decision-makers track the program's progress in achieving goals and objectives?

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When you determine that services need to change to better meet the needs of children and families, are these changes reflected in your written plans? What is the process you use to make this happen?

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How is information regarding this Head Start program made available to the public?

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Specific questions for the program director about the Head Start *Program Information Report (PIR)*:

How is the information needed for the *PIR* collected across the program?

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Is the information analyzed for accuracy and correctness in any way? For example, is the information compared to the same data contained in other management information reports for the same time period to see if it is in agreement?

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Is the information in the *PIR* used by managers and staff to identify possible performance problems and make improvements? Give examples. Is the information integrated with the program's annual planning process?

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## Incorporating Relevant Data Sources:

Additional observations, document reviews, or interview questions that this team may choose to add:

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Include any key insights you may have learned from reviewing important data sources such as the *PRISM* report, *PIR* data, Community Assessment, strategic plan or short and long term program goals:

[illegible]

## CHILD/FAMILY FILE AUDIT

### Instructions:

For each file you review, place the child's name and identifying information in the space provided across the top of the instrument. Review each file and mark (X) if you find verification of the Head Start requirement within the file. Mark (0) if no evidence is found.

Before starting, ask a staff member to show you how the files are organized and where each piece of information is typically located.

While conducting your audit, note patterns that emerge which point to a potential weakness in the program's overall record-keeping system, such as lack of documentation, incorrect documentation by new staff, etc. Include the information in your summary.

Duplicate this form as needed.

Child's name or identifying information

Total

## Child's name or identifying information

Child's name or identifying information

# CHILD/FAMILY FILE AUDIT CHECKLIST

Child's name or identifying information

[illegible]

Child's name or identifying information

For HS 3 to 5 yr. olds only

CHILD/FAMILY FILE AUDIT

Child's name or identifying information

															Total	
Information/Service	Documentation of well-baby visits															
	Medical treatment needed?															
	Treatment completed															
	Forwarding of records at end of HS/EHS															
	IEPs (HS children w/ disabilities only)															
	IFSP (EHS children w/ disabilities only)															

# Team Member Summary Worksheet

## Summary of Results for Record-Keeping and Reporting

Areas where the program is working well. Provide examples of program strengths or areas where the program exceeds *Performance Standards*:

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Areas where the program needs improvement:

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Additional areas of concern:

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## TEAM LEADER BOOKLET ANALYSIS

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Booklet # \_\_\_\_\_

Booklet Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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